Cooking and Eating Utensils

Ma Aye Myaing does her work directly in front of the fireplace in a squating position, often resting on the tiny bamboo stool. A few sticks of firewood, or brush, are placed within the three sided enclosure made of three single bricks on edge. A hollow bamboo tube about 10 inches long and 1½ inches in diameter is periodically used to blow the fire to a hot flame in lieu of a draft. The identifications of the cooking and eating utensils given below were provided by Daw Aw Zar and U Myaing in an interview in which photographs of the objects were used. 415 252 [516] [352] [372]

HTA MIN O (cooking pot); This is an earthenware jar used for cooking vegetables and other foods. It is a round based globular form with outflaring rim. A wide conical shaped lid with flat disc knob for raising goes over the orifice. It is smooth, light tan in colour throughout and about ¼ inch in thickness. It is tempered with sand. A stamped design encircles the widest diameter on the body. This diameter is about 7 inches, height is 4½ inches. One or two are kept on hand (Pathwe: several. Camp: one). They cost 5 annas each. This sand tempered, stamped, earthenware appears in the early European contact period (late 1500's) at Syriam (Orr, K.G. "Stratigraphy in Lower Burma" Ms. in preparation.) It is rapidly being discarded in favour of aluminum pots which are not nearly as cheap but do not break Traditionally this pot is used to cook rice. In speaking of its use Daw Aw Zar said: "We keep one or two, to boil vegetables and do other things to eat, seeing that there are seven people we have to cook (i.e. rice) with a big aluminum pot." [172] [178]

HIN O (curry pot): This jar is generally of the same shape as the one described above but is wider at the orifice (8 inches diameter) though about the same height. It is of the same ware type; has a wavy-line stamped design just under the rim. Ordinarily equipped with a conical lid, this vessel had a flat aluminum lid. This vessel is used to cook curry. It was brought from Pathwe, where it was bought at a cost of 6 annas. Number used in Pathwe: several, camp: 1. [435]

LAPHET-YE-OH (tea pot): The tea pot is also of tan earthenware and generally of the same ware as the cooking pots, with the exception that the surface was carefully scraped and slightly burnished. The body is globular, with thumb-like spout, and semi-circular clay handle. This pot was brought from Pantanaw, where it had cost 8 annas. [323]

HIN O (food storage jar): Whereas the cooking vessels are moulded by hand with the aid of a paddle, and lack glazing, the storage jars are glazed and have been made on the wheel. These glazed jars also have flat disc bases, and pear-shaped bodies with contracted necks and short, collar-like rims. In every way they appear to be a separate tradition from the cooking ware. The glaze is dark reddish-brown over a hard-baked purple-red core. The interior is thoroughly glazed but the glaze only covers the upper half of the exterior. The reddish-brown glaze is recent, appearing in ceramic collections of the last century in Rangoon (Orr, K.G. "Stratigraphy in Lower Burma", the Monkina Street section) being preceeded by a yellow-black glaze in the early European period at Syriam. [172]

Salt saffron, oils, etc are stored in these jars. The one examined was about 4 inches in height and 5 inches in diameter. It came from Pathwe and cost 3 annas. Number in Pathwe: several, camp: 3. [251] [435]

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

224
136

209. THE HAMADRYAD.

323

one commonly notices. A great lizard (*put*), weighing twenty to forty pounds, infests hollow trees; it is shot and eaten by the Burmans, and its skin used for sandals. Most of the venomous snakes of India are common to Burma, excepting the small and deadly *krait*. The formidable hamadryad is added, but there are no fully established cases of the pursuit of man which is attributed to this snake. The casualties due to snake-bite are chiefly among the reapers. The gigantic python is not dangerous to man. Scorpions and centipedes are common enough, but their stings and bites are not often serious.

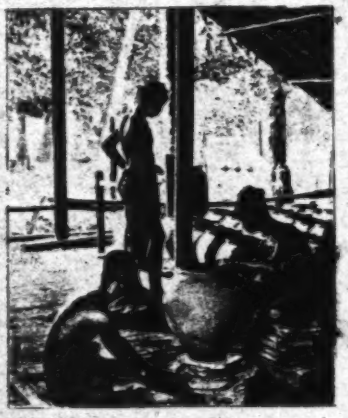
Good clay for pottery is only found in certain localities, and from these the manufactures are sent to great distances by water. Clay almost stone-hard and laterite are pounded with a tilt-hammer, screened, and worked up in certain proportions with water and sand, by treading with the feet. The best and strongest pots for cooking are not turned on the lathe but *patted* into shape by hand. These are but slightly porous and of a hard consistence. The lathe pottery is very porous when not glazed. A salt glaze is used for jars to store oil. For ornamental work, lead glazes, coloured with vitriols, are employed. At the potteries, immense reverberating kilns are built for firing the pots. Smaller kilns are fired all round or are excavated underground on the plan of the lime-kiln. Wood is the fuel used.

210. POTTERY: PATTING THE WARE INTO SHAPE.

333
341
346

Stone for building is scarce, except in Arakán. Masonry is reserved for the *zedi*. Of late, owing to a fresh impulse from India, masonry has again come into greater use. Everywhere in the inhabited plains one

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4



211. LATHE POTTERY.

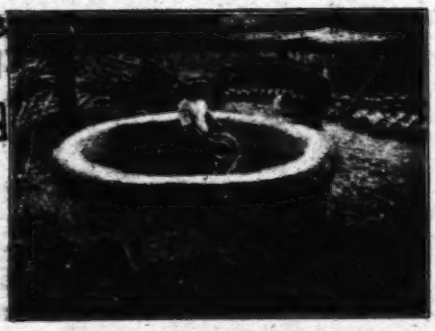
comes upon bricks, and on nearly every hill bricks bear evidence that at some time a *zedi* had crowned the top. In the moist region the disintegrating effect of the vegetation is such that frequently no indication remains of the form of the original structure. The use of brick doubtless came in with the early Buddhist architecture exemplified at Pagán. The brick-fields are on the confines of the rice-fields, and of the same character as to soil, a light loam. The work begins in November after the ground has dried. The surface soil is rejected and the earth dug with mattocks a yard or two deep. The clods are soaked in water and trodden into a doughy mass with an admixture of rice husk. The bricks are moulded direct on the ground, which has been smoothed beforehand, and are left to dry in the sun (No. 181). Before stacking the dried bricks, the lower or rough edge is trimmed with a *dá*. The commonest size of brick is 12" × 6" × 1¼". A burn consists of ten thousand bricks and sells for about forty-five rupees. In the dry zone, brick has always been used for house-building to some extent, unless when prohibited by the government. In the south, the brick-work is invariably plastered over with *ingade* to prevent the clay mortar from washing out. Now that bricklaying in Pegu has passed into the hands of masons from India, lime-mortar is usual.

The limestone rocks which are a feature of the Eastern Peninsula, rise abruptly from the plains to heights of one to three thousand feet (No. 107). They are honeycombed with fissures which facilitate quarrying. During the floods, boats can approach and be loaded with the stone. Lime is used for whitewash, plaster, mortar, and for chewing

212. FANCY POTTERY, SHAN.

333
341
346
[323]
[323]
[463
563
177]
333
341

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4



213. KILN FOR PATTED WARES.

with betel. The limestone rocks abound in caves, many of which have been incrusted with images, and transformed into temples and shrines (No. 84), but the rock is not hewn. The lime is packed in baskets of leaf and bamboo-wicker, a stone or two in weight; it sells at the kiln for one and a half to two rupees a hundredweight. The tenacity of the Burman lime-plaster is very great. Strength is obtained by liberal use of lime, and in the better class of work by the addition of glue and palm sugar. Hair and fibre are not added. For the first layers, coarse sand is mixed with the lime, for the finishing layers, fine sand. The decoration of the work is only roughly indicated in the masonry. The relief of the ornament is high, and the thickness of the stucco very considerable in parts. The stucco is frequently gilt, on *zedi* and images. The gold-size (*thissi*, p. 101) is applied direct to the plaster, which, however, in time, furnishes a soil for lichen, causing the gold to scale off.

Although stone is not quarried in sufficient abundance for building except in Arakán, good stone for carving images is found in several places. The most notable of these is Taung-u, on the Irawadi, opposite Pagán. More important than the red sandstone industry of Taung-u is the industry at Sagáing, opposite Ava, on the Irawadi, where a beautiful white marble is quarried. The heavy blocks are hewn in the rough at the quarry and transported to the site of erection to be finished. The subjects are chiefly the conventional images of the Buddha, from a pound in weight to several tons (No. 218).

214. POTTERY SHOP.

The cordage used in